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SUBJECT: UNAMID DEPLOYMENT UPDATE

REF: A) STATE 100304  
B) KHARTOUM 1312

¶1. (SBU) Summary: UNAMID officials still believe that sixty-percent deployment is possible by the end of 2008, and eighty-percent is achievable by the end of March 2009. However, for this to happen, all former AMIS battalions must rotate at full strength and several new battalions have to be willing to "light deploy" at the super camps to provide security and then later shift to other locations as needed. The key obstacle to deployment remains the transportation of containers with TCC equipment. UNAMID officials are eager to take advantage of the US offer of airlift for the containers, which is a higher priority than the transportation of troops. The challenge with the US offer will be managing new backlogs at the airports. The Egyptian and Ethiopian battalions are willing to self-deploy, and UNAMID supports this, but DPKO must be convinced. Thai and Nepalese troops are expected before the end of the year. UNAMID universally noted that the GOS has been fully supportive of deployment efforts by extending airport hours, opening Geneina airport to UNAMID transport flights, clearing over 600 visas, and providing security escorts to convoys every 24 hours. TCC helicopters are desperately needed, especially troop transport helicopters that can be used to investigate and respond to reports of fighting. The current contracted helicopters are not viable given insurance issues following the firing on of several UNAMID aircraft in the last two weeks. UNAMID remains split over which group attacked and killed 7 UNAMID peacekeepers on July 7 west of Shangil Tobaya, but the consensus appears to be turning toward SLA/Unity despite a lack of clear evidence. It appears unlikely that UNAMID will reach a definitive conclusion and/or announce a determination of responsibility. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) The following UNAMID officials provided information for this report during meetings with polchief September 23-24 in El Fasher:

- Force Commander General Agwai
- Deputy Force Commander General Karenzi
- Deputy JSR for Operations Medilli
- JSR Chief of Staff Alstrom
- Chief of Plans Colonel Stafford
- Deputy Director of Mission Support Weiszegger

Deployment Timeline  
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¶3. (SBU) Although slightly less optimistic than during meetings in late August (ref c), UNAMID officials still maintain that

eighty-percent deployment of TCC contingents is possible by the end of March 2009 (11,000 additional troops). Conservative estimates for deployment by the end of 2008 remain at roughly sixty-percent (5000 additional troops). Deployment is dependent on the arrival of contingent-owned equipment (COE - ie. Containers,) which has finally begun to move from Obeid to Nyala and from Port Sudan directly into Darfur thanks to several new shipping contracts. Mission Support Deputy Director Weiszegger reported that 400 "shipping units" (containers, vehicles, and other large shipments) had been moved over the last week alone, by road and by rail. D/JSR Medilli estimated that between 45 and 60 days would be required to clear the entire backlog of approximately 4000 units. Medilli said that the US offer of airlift is "most welcome," but UNAMID planners will continue with their current projections based on overland transport with the existing contracts. Medilli said that although contractors are not performing as well as he would like, there have been significant improvements in logistics over the last two months thanks to UNAMID's new shipping contracts. He noted that UNAMID suffered due to poor planning at the outset of the mission "by people who had no idea of local conditions and no knowledge of the local market."

14. (SBU) Military Planning Chief Colonel Stafford said that the target of almost sixty-percent deployment by the end of 2008 is a realistic estimate given current constraints. He provided a detailed planning schedule (which post will scan and forward to AF/SPG, IO, and USUN) that shows approximately 5000 additional troops arriving by the end of 2008 (including the plussed-up rotating former AMIS battalions) and a total of 11,000 additional troops (including the 5000) arriving before the end of March 2008. Stafford noted that not only the shipment of COE but also the adequate preparation of camps is required before new troops arrive,

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though he said most troops should be willing to deploy to a "brown patch" where the ground has been leveled, a security perimeter and established with fencing, and basic infrastructure such as water tanks and latrines with septic tanks installed. The TCCs can install their own tents and other facilities.

15. (SBU) Stafford said that the plussed-up former AMIS battalions will all deploy to the same locations initially, and that current camps can accommodate the influx of additional troops without additional construction.

#### Self Deployment

16. (SBU) Both Stafford and Weiszegger were aware of the Ethiopian offer to self-deploy. Stafford pointed out that if the offer is just to self-deploy troops, it is almost useless as the COE would still have to be transported before the arrival of the troops - and it is currently enroute. However both Stafford and Weiszegger seemed to believe that if the offer included some COE such as rations, basic equipment and some vehicles, the offer could be quite valuable and suggested that it should be pushed along with DPKO. Stafford noted that the Ethiopian offer of self-deployment only gets them as far as Darfur and they would still need to be deployed by UNAMID within Darfur, so the offer is not a panacea in the sense of being able to get troops into the field quickly. Both Stafford and Weiszegger noted that it is easy for the UN to deploy troops by plane into Darfur from abroad as well; the difficult part is transporting their COE. Weiszegger noted that the Egyptians are already self-deploying, and had driven 72 of their own vehicles from Obeid to Um Kadada over the weekend.

#### Light Deployment and Supercamps

17. (SBU) D/JSR Medilli is still pushing hard for the concept of "light deployment," not just to pump up numbers of boots on the ground before the end of the year, but also to provide security at the new supercamps. FC Agwai said that light deployment at supercamps would be fine if there were adequate conditions to accommodate them, but Agwai did not support light deployment at other locations. He cited the UNAMID camp at Kulbus as a good

example of a camp that did not have adequate conditions (soldiers are too cramped, beds are too close together, and there are not enough toilets) and pointed to poor morale as a result. DFC Karenzi was more supportive of the light deployment concept, not only at the supercamps but also at other locations. Karenzi's view is that all UNAMID troops should be field-ready and should be able to deploy with just the basic necessities.

¶18. (SBU) Medilli and Weiszegger both said that PAE has been making good progress at all three supercamps (Fasher, Nyala, Geneina) but will not complete them before departing Sudan for good when their contract ends in mid-December. However the camps are being constructed in blocks and parts of all three supercamps will be in use by the middle to end of October. Nyala is the supercamp with the most problems, as part of the camp where tents were due to be placed is flooded, and PAE has had to redesign the project. Medilli said that UNAMID still does not have a plan for back-filling for PAE when it leaves. The basic plan is to hire all of PAE's local staff and even some of the expat staff if possible, while also hiring some additional local companies and using TCC engineers to oversee some aspects of the projects. However the issue of overall project oversight, planning, and management is the biggest challenge, and UNAMID still does not have a plan in place to address this gap.

#### US Offer of Airlift -----

¶19. (SBU) All UNAMID officials expressed strong support for the US offer of airlift and hoped that it could be provided as soon as possible. FC Agwai noted that the offer was "better late than never" since the extreme challenges of moving COE of six months ago have begun to be addressed. Medilli said that an offer to help move COE is more useful than an offer to move troops, as the former is much more difficult and critical at this stage of deployment than the latter. Medilli also noted that airlift will create additional challenges and bottlenecks as the airports and UNAMID can only accommodate so many flights and so much cargo in a given day. There is storage at the supercamp, but trucks will need to be arranged, as well as cargo handling at the airports. (Comment: When the US begins to discuss specific plans for the airlift operations, in addition to carefully mapping out which shipments should be given priority given deployment timelines, an offer to provide forklifts or other cargo handling equipment even if on a temporary basis to accompany the flights may be essential. End comment.)

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#### Support from the GOS -----

¶10. (SBU) UNAMID officials universally praised the GOS for recent cooperation with deployment. Airports are now open from 7 am to 7 pm, the Geneina airport is in use even for large cargo planes, and while one month ago there was a back-log of 700 visas, now there are only 75 pending visas, according to Weiszegger. However, visas for US military officers now require approval from the intelligence services, according to information that UNAMID has received from the MFA. UNAMID has observed that staff from four countries - the US, UK, Canada, and Denmark - routinely experience long delays receiving visas as part of UNAMID. Australian staff also sometimes experience long delays.

¶11. (SBU) Following the Kalma camp massacre, the GOS established a high-level security committee to coordinate with UNAMID, including the Ministers of Interior and Defense. COS Alstrom noted that UNAMID now has a police liaison officer embedded with the Central Reserve Police (CRP - a NISS police force) in Khartoum to coordinate on IDP policing and escorts for UNAMID convoys. Alstrom said that the GOS is now providing CRP escorts every 24 hours without fail and showed police photos of CRP officers helping UNAMID dig convoy trucks out of the mud enroute from El Obeid to El Fasher. "These guys aren't just along for the ride, they're helping us get the equipment into Darfur," Alstrom rejoiced. Alstrom noted as well that IDPs in Kalma Camp and Zam Zam Camp, previously hesitant to accept UNAMID police, now are eager to have a 24-hour UNAMID police presence. UNAMID is now providing 24-hour police presence in Kalma

but not in any other location due to a lack of FPUs (only 1 of 19 FPUs - the Bangladeshi FPU in Nyala - is currently deployed).

#### Helicopters

¶12. (SBU) FC Agwai urged that TCC helicopter assets be identified immediately. He noted that several UNAMID helicopters have been shot at in the last month, most notably last week when UNAMID attempted to investigate the fighting between GOS and SLM/Minawi forces north of El Fasher. Agwai said it is increasingly difficult for UNAMID to investigate reports of attacks or fighting due to the lack of TCC helicopters and the increase in the number of incidents of firings upon UNAMID's current contracted air assets. Agwai said that it may soon be no longer possible to use the current contracted helicopters for anything other than transport, as questions have reportedly been raised by the insurers of the helicopters, given the shooting incidents. Agwai noted that this would not be a problem with TCC helicopters. Agwai expressed a strong preference for TCC troop transport helicopters rather than attack helicopters. He said attack helicopters would rarely be used, and what UNAMID needs are basic transport helicopters that can be used to support overland patrols and investigate incidents. Agwai said night vision capability is not required since "in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king." COS Alstrom also noted that the JSR increasingly feels that the lack of TCC helicopters limits the range of patrols, as UNAMID will likely be reticent to send troops on patrols over long distances since it is difficult to reach them without adequate air assets then if they come under attack (as happened July 7 outside of Shangil Tobay).

#### July 7 Attack

¶13. (SBU) While UNAMID has not reached a definitive determination regarding which armed group perpetrated the heinous attack on UNAMID forces outside of Shangil Tobay on July 7, the consensus appears to be leaning toward placing blame on SLA/Unity. FC Agwai told polchief that he personally believes "based on all the evidence I have seen" that it was SLA/U. Agwai noted that JSR Adada told him about CDA Fernandez' suspicion in July that it was SLA/U, but Agwai said he had seen additional information from various rebel groups since then pointing the finger at SLA/U. Agwai said that an investigation had just been concluded, but that the results would likely not be announced since the conclusions were not definitive. He noted that DFC Karenzi still believes that it was GOS forces along with janjaweed, based on the strong belief of his own (Rwandan) soldiers who came under attack. Agwai said that he is also convinced that it was SLA/U troops that attacked AMIS at Haskanita in 2007 "based on the evidence," but also based on his personal observation of SLA/U soldiers wearing clothing several months later that could only have come from the Nigerian battalion.

¶14. (SBU) DFC Karenzi said he is still convinced that it was government troops, partly because of the information from the

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Rwandan soldiers at the battle site (sustained attack, high caliber weapons, dark green uniforms) but also because the MFA U/S Mutrif Siddiq "seemed to know too much" about the attack when he met with UNAMID and provided the government's information on why it was likely SLA/U. COS Alstrom said he had never seen morale among troops so high as it was among the Rwandans after the attack when they performed a war dance for JSR Adada at a memorial for the death of their fallen colleagues. He said the Rwandans obviously acquitted themselves well in battle and had beaten back the attackers - which is considered by all other UNAMID troops to be a success story, and has been instrumental in giving the Rwandan troops in UNAMID increased prestige and respect.

#### Comment

¶15. (SBU) UNAMID is gradually transforming itself into a capable logistical machine with a number of key staff (Medilli, Alstrom,

Weiszegger) who are highly qualified, and have put the mission on a course to achieve some gains in deployment by the end of the year. The loss of PAE will be significant. UN/DFS needs to provide some civilian engineering managers to the operation to begin working alongside PAE on an urgent basis, as there is currently no one in UNAMID nor on the local economy who is capable of managing such a large contracting/construction operation. Despite the fact that the work being performed is fairly basic, there are still key management and engineering decisions that must be handled correctly, as shown in PAE's apparent mistake in planning and designing the lay-out of the Nyala supercamp. The offer of US airlift has generated significant excitement, but must be planned carefully as quickly as possible to maximize its benefit and avoid creating additional bottlenecks.

¶16. (SBU) Polchief also had constructive meetings with Civil Affairs, JMAC, and UNDSS, which will be reported septel. These sections appear to have some capable staff and are gradually getting up to speed. Civil Affairs is planning to bring in experts to conduct workshops on land rights and compensation, among other issues. JMAC appeared to have relatively timely and insightful information about the locations and strengths of rebel movements, as well as recent alliances (which were mostly known to Embassy Khartoum and have been reported). Perhaps understandably, the JMST office remains almost vacant with only a couple of staff who were ill-informed about the Chief Mediator's plans. Of particular concern, all contacts cited in this cable noted the severe weakness of the UNAMID political section in providing adequate support to the JSR and the mission as a whole. The UNAMID political section is currently headed by DDDC Chief Abdul Mohammed, who eventually should return to that role once a permanent UNAMID political chief is assigned. UN/DPKO should be encouraged to assign a capable political chief to UNAMID as soon as possible.

FERNANDEZ